Concern for the Hereafter

In the Light of Quran & Sunnah

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

If we were to ask a passerby on the street, "Where are you coming from and where are you going?" and he cannot give us an answer, then we will surely think he is crazy. Yet in our own lives, we are guilty of practically the same heedlessness. We too are neither aware of our beginning, nor are we concerned about our end. Will we live forever in this alluring and fun- filled world? No way! We know that death will come to us some day and we will be left alone in a dark grave. Our beautiful houses, fine garments, sumptuous foods and other comforts and luxuries will all be left behind. The people who claim to love us so much will dress us in a white shroud and bury us under a mound of earth, leaving us all alone. We will become a dim memory for those people whose goodwill we preferred over obedience to Allah and His Prophet (SAW). They will busy themselves once again in the attractions of this world and we will be on our own, enveloped in the darkness of the grave.

The grave is the door to the other world. We have seen this door opening for someone or the other and closing behind them often enough. Yet there are few of us willing to accept the fact that this door will also open for us in the very same way and then close behind us forever. Despite the fact that a person sees daily that one by one, people are being called to be presented to Allah, he deceives himself into thinking that the summons to Allah's court will never come for him.

The day is fast-approaching when everyone will be presented before Allah in a state where there will be complete silence and no one will be able to speak except the Lord of the Worlds. This day, only truth will carry any weight and other than this everything will become inconsequential. This will be the Day of Judgment and only death stands between us and this day. All of us are steadily moving towards an outcome where we will have either eternal happiness or perpetual punishment. Every moment that passes brings us even closer to that final outcome which will be the fate of each one of us. Each day the sun sets reduces one more day from our lives and it is only in this life that we have an opportunity to prepare for the Day of Terror which is fast approaching. We will have to face the repercussions of our deeds in this relatively short life for an eternity. While the comforts of the Hereafter are very pleasurable, as the Prophet (SAW) said:

"A (small) place equal to an area occupied by a whip in Paradise is better than the (whole) world and whatever is in it." **(Bukhari)**

its discomforts are indeed very painful. The Prophet (SAW) said:

"The least tormented of the inhabitants of the Fire would be he who would wear two shoes of fire and his brain would boil on account of the heat of the shoes." **(Muslim)**

The similitude of our life is that of an ice vendor whose capital is

dwindling away very moment. The only way he can save himself from loss is to try to sell the ice before it melts; otherwise he will have nothing to show for his efforts and will have to return from the market empty-handed. So before death overtakes us and separates us permanently from this world which is the place for action and takes us to a place where there is only the outcome of our actions, it is necessary for us to focus on putting our abilities and resources to correct use. There is no doubt that one day we will have to stand before the Master of the Universe and account for their correct use. Fortunate will be the people who Allah will include, that day, amongst His faithful devotees and it is only they who will be honoured. How unfortunate and miserable will be those who Allah will reject, because after that day there will be nothing for them but humiliation, chastisement and a life of bitter regrets. People are in deep slumber and when they will wake up, the fire of Hell will make it impossible for them to sleep. They are heedless now and will awaken only to find that there is no chance to escape from their deprivation and misery.

We must understand that this world is a place of deception. In this world people's appearance too can be very deceptive. Some camouflage their inner state and feelings by beautiful words, while others have totally immersed themselves in this materialistic world and its attractions and gains. Every person seems to have found some legal ruling or loophole to certify that his ignorance or wrongdoing is justified. People have conveniently invented a God for themselves who it is not necessary to fear; they have found a prophet who came to this world only so he can intercede with Allah for them in the Hereafter despite all their wrongdoings and disobedience to His commands. People have found a Hereafter where Paradise is only for them and Hell for others, prayers which can be offered along with committing indecent acts and arrogant deeds and a religion to argue about endlessly but which does not require to be acted upon. But remember that in the same way that fake gold is only gold till it is tested, this business of deceiving oneself exists only till Allah will appear and His scales of justice are set up.

Consciously or unconsciously, people think this world to be the place of measuring their success or failure. In the Quran we are told that this is merely a deception.

"The Day that He assembles you (all) for a day of Assembly that will be a day of mutual loss and gain (among you)." **(9:64)**

This will be an intensely terrifying moment of a person's life and when it comes, a person will be horrified at seeing himself in a situation so contrary to his expectations. Suddenly he will realise that the life of the world which he thought was the only reality was nothing but a deception. He had thought that he was free to do whatever he wanted, but in the end he found himself to be totally helpless. He had thought

himself to be wealthy, but in fact, in the Hereafter, he was empty handed; he had thought that he was powerful, but in fact in God's sight, he was weaker than a fly or mosquito. In this world he had thought he had the support of so many people, but there he was totally on his own.

Oh! Man is unaware of that reality with which he should be most familiar!

Whatever a person wishes to do for his Hereafter is to be done in this very life itself. We do not know how much or little period of our lives we have left. How many people have we seen who have passed away before our very eyes! Similarly there will be a time when those that see us now will not see us anymore because we too would have departed this world. We will have completed our life term and gone to our Lord having passed through an exam, the results of which we will receive in the next world. This life is all we have, and if we lose this opportunity, unlike the exams of this world, there will be no second chances! There is an absolute finality about this life because every moment that passes away, passes away never to return again. Allah says in Quran:

"Every soul shall have a taste of death: and only on the Day of Judgment shall you be paid your full recompense. Only he who is saved far from the fire and admitted to the garden will have attained the object (of life): for the life of this world is but goods and chattels of deception." **(3:185)**

This is an invitation to ponder on the reality of life. We earnestly request you to read it repeatedly and give it serious thought as we are sure that each one of you wants to be successful. It is also worth remembering that living Islam not only improves your Hereafter, but also the quality of your life in this very world.

Allah says in Quran:

"Whoever works righteousness man or woman and has faith, verily to him will We give a new life, a life that is good and pure and We will bestow on such their reward according to the best of their actions." **(16:97)**

There was an incident in Sheikh Saadi's life which was a learning experience for him. When he was young, his father gifted him a gold ring which he wore to the market. Seeing his inexperience, a thug offered him a few sweets in exchange for it and Sheikh Saadi gave him his ring. His father told him that because he was a kid and did not know the value of gold, he could not resist the temptation and his desire for just a few sweets cost him his expensive ring. This is the way Satan moves; he bribes us with small and merely transient pleasures with the lure of immediate gratification and incites us to sin, thus depriving us of a magnificent thing like Paradise. The comforts of this world which are not acquired through Islamically permissible means are in fact 'sweets' offered by Satan and unfortunately, we fall into his trap and

end up exchanging the eternal and infinitely greater pleasures of Paradise for these small and deceptive pleasures. For God's sake, don't let Satan deceive you! The pleasures and bounties of Paradise are beyond human imagination but because we lack a firm conviction in their existence, we trade them in for so little. If we were certain of their existence we would not be so serious or concerned about anything more than the Hereafter and this conviction can only come from reading the Quran. The Prophet (SAW) Said:

"These hearts become rusty just as iron does when water gets to it". On being asked what could clear them the Prophet (SAW) replied:

"A great amount of remembrance of death and recitation of the Quran."

(Baihaqi)

We should read the Quran with the intention that Allah should give us guidance and bestow upon us the ability to act upon its commands. We have no choice but to pass the test which is the life of this world because no one will be able to bear the repercussions of failure.

The Prophet (SAW)said:

"My Lord says, 'If My slave comes nearer to me for a span, I go nearer to him for a cubit; and if he comes nearer to Me for a cubit, I go nearer to him for the span of outstretched arms; and if he comes to Me walking, I go to him running." **(Bukhari)**

This means that if a person resolves to travel on the path of Allah, Allah will make that journey easier for him. If person moves towards Allah, Allah knows just how weak he is and thus He moves forward to bring him closer to Himself. Even if you are unsteady on your feet and find yourself stumbling to get there, at least attempt to move towards Him. It is not possible that he will not steady you and hold you. Allah has promised to accept every supplication of His slave which is in his long-term interest. Religion is nothing but complete goodness. If the slave asks his Lord, "O my Lord, bestow upon me the ability to walk on the path of Islam," how is it possible that Allah will not grant him his request? If you ask Allah with full sincerity for Paradise, it is not possible that He will let you walk on the paths that lead to Hell. It is just not possible, that you sincerely ask Allah for His remembrance and he lets you become heedless, that you ask Him to bestow you with an intense desire for success in the Hereafter and that He should immerse you in the love of the world. If these required things are not in your life, then it means that you have either never asked for them or that you never asked for them sincerely enough and thus you never got them. Whoever asks for guidance can never be deprived of it. But remember that asking Allah does not just mean that you keep repeating some words that you have learnt like a parrot without knowing what they mean. Allah does not just look at your words but at the sincerity with which they are said. For Him you are the seeker of whatever your whole being is intensely desirous of from Him. If a child asks its mother for

bread, it is not possible that she will give him a brand of fire instead. Allah who is more Gracious and Loving to His slaves than this will never deprive a person of what he truly wants. The Prophet (SAW) said:

"Your Lord is munificent and generous, and is ashamed to turn away empty the hands of His servant when he raises them to Him."

(Abu Dawood)

Remember that it is against the generosity of the Owner of the universe to let a situation arise that when a person meets his Lord on the Day of Resurrection, he is disappointed with Him and that he says: 'O my Lord, I asked you for something but you did not give it to me." By God this is impossible, this is impossible! The Lord of the Universe comes closer to you with all his treasures morning and evening and says, *"Who is asking Me that I may give him?"* But if those who would be takers are fast asleep in their comfortable beds, who is to blame? Is it the fault of the giver?

Completely surrender yourself to Allah with total sincerity. Become regular in your prayers, read at least three ruku of the Quran daily comprehending the words and send Darood (blessings and salutations) on the Prophet (SAW). If your intention is pure and sincere, then In Sha Allah, in 40 days you will feel the change in yourself. All the while, pray to Allah for steadfastness and constancy and even if unsteady on your feet, continue to move towards Allah. When you start acting upon His commandments, the path will automatically become easy. It may appear steep and difficult, but in reality it is not so for the earnest seeker of truth. Remember that the destination is magnificent and worth all the effort. In contrast, the alternate way is alluring and appears very easy but the destination is the deep and terrifying pit of Hell. The choice is yours. Remember that it is easy to wake up someone who is asleep, but it is practically impossible to wake up those who look awake. Wake up now and wake others up! Save yourself and your families from the fire whose fuel is people and stones. If you start with purity of intention, the task will become very easy because Allah is very Gracious and Merciful to the believers. Allah tells us in Quran:

"O mankind! Verily there has come to you a convincing proof from your Lord: For We have sent unto you a light (that is) manifest. Then those who believe in Allah and hold fast to Him, soon will He admit them to Mercy and Grace from Himself and guide them to Himself by a straight way."

(4:174-175)

May Allah be your Guardian, Protector and Helper. Ameen

PYAME DOST House # ZB-1037/C, Sector 3,
Khayaban -e- Sir Syed, Rawalpindi, Pakistan.
Website: www.pyamedost.org
E-mail: pyamedost@hotmail.com